

Washington, DC -

Congressman Mark Kirk announced the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) will issue consumer alerts to parents and children regarding the dangers of using MySpace.com and other social networking sites.

The FTC's decision to issue the consumer alerts comes after Kirk and Chairman Frank Wolf (R-VA) sent two letters – the second cosigned by 20 Members of Congress -- to the Commission urging them to issue a national consumer alert. Wolf chairs the Science, State and Justice House Appropriations Subcommittee that funds the FTC. Kirk is the third ranking member on the subcommittee.

"One in five children receives unwanted sexual advances online," said Kirk. "Social networking sites like MySpace.com contain web pages for tens of millions of American children. Using the anonymity of the Internet, pedophiles found a virtual hunting ground to prey on children. I welcome the decision by the FTC to issue a national consumer alert, urging parents to monitor who is contacting their children via these sites and warning children to use caution when setting up a personal web page.

Last month, Kirk and his Student Leadership Advisory Board taped Public Service Announcements warning parents to monitor their children's web activities and urged their peers to use common sense when displaying a personal profile on social networking sites like MySpace.com.

"MySpace.com removed 200,000 "objectionable" profiles recently, but there are several million sites composed by children," said Kirk. "So far we are only dealing with the tip of the iceberg. It is a common sense step for the FTC to warn parents of the growing online danger to children."

The FTC will start running the National Consumer Alerts this week.

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